

Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor* in the Ilemi Triangle

During the mid morning of 17 February 1988 a Great Grey Shrike *Lanius excubitor* was found 18 km south of Kibish, in the Ilemi Triangle, Kenya/Sudan border area at c. 5°20'N, 35°40'E. It was watched for about 15 min in good light, perched at 15–30 m on the tops of Acacia bushes in low flat country. Twice it flew about 50 m to a new perch.

A largish shrike with a large, fairly long and well hooked bill, it had pale grey upperparts. A black face mask included the loreal region and ear coverts and passed just above the eye. The cap and forehead were pale grey to the top edge of the bill, and there was no white supercilium. The bill was horn coloured. The wings were black with a large white speculum, and in flight showed a white band right the way across. The grey mantle was bordered by whitish outer scapulars, which formed a band against the black wing. The rump was grey. The tail was medium length (for a shrike) and well graduated at the tip, black with a narrow white edge and white corners. To judge from its bill colour and the lack of any frontal band the bird was of the Palaearctic race *pallidirostris*, from Central Asia.

The Ilemi Triangle is currently policed by Kenya. There are no previous acceptable records of the Great Grey Shrike from East Africa. The nearest record in the Sudan is from 11°N, some 600 km to the north (Nikolaus 1987).

Reference

NIKOLAUS G. 1987. *Distributional atlas of Sudan's birds with notes on habitat and status*. Bonner zoologische Monographien No. 25.

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Leaf-stripping display by a Holub's Golden Weaver *Ploceus xanthops*

While at the Kakamega Forest, Western Province, Kenya, I had an opportunity to observe the following courtship display of a male Holub's Golden Weaver *Ploceus xanthops*. On 13 January 1988 I had noted a pair of these weavers at a nest along the Lugusida River in the forest (0°15'N, 34°53'E). These observations were made where the river cuts through an area mostly cleared of forest except for a strip right along the river's edge. The banks of the river were steeply sloped and had a dense growth of bushes and vines. There were three Holub's Golden Weaver nests in the area (two were about 30 cm apart and the third about 3 m away), all overhanging the river. One was incomplete and another appeared rather old. The nests were roughly spherical with a downward-facing entrance. I returned the next day and at 11:20 a male and female arrived at the bank downstream and opposite the nests. The female flew immediately into the dense thickets, out of sight, while the male alighted on an exposed horizontal vine and proceeded to display. He was in a somewhat crouched position with his tail held high and quivering up and down (Fig. 1). He continued in this display for about one minute, though he was looking about and moving along the vine all the time. He then went to an adjacent vertical vine and slowly climbed up while pulling off and dropping every leaf, all the while quivering his tail. After he had stripped